

On April 29, Sedgwick now in command of the VI Corps who we remember all too well from Crampton's Gap, crossed the river on pontoon bridges and occupied Fredericksburg and McLaws' troops took up their old defensive position behind the stone wall. This time the Legion was there. Sharpshooters were sent out, remaining in position throughout the day and night. When the fog lifted the following morning it revealed that the enemy had withdrawn but had now crossed on pontoon bridges further downstream.

Hooker had already crossed at the higher-up fords and action was already beginning there as Lee had quickly realized what "Fighting Joe" was up to. Lee would leave a small force under General Early to hold Fredericksburg against Sedgwick and move to meet Hooker's main thrust.

McLaws' troops moved out of their breastworks and advanced west up the Plank Road toward Chancellorsville. Wofford's and the Legion did not move out until between midnight and 1:00 AM, however, and marched out the turnpike to form on Smith's Hill on McLaws' right. Lee, using Jackson, was pushing the advanced Federal guard back up the turnpike toward the Chancellor house at Chancellorsville which is about 10 miles from Fredericksburg. This brick house, along with its outbuildings, is the only building at Chancellorsville but because several important roads intersect there it is a strategic location. McLaws' soldiers halted for the night about where Mine Run crosses the road, cooked rations and prepared for what they knew would be a hard-fought day tomorrow. Wofford then moved further out on the right across the Lewis farm and up the Mine Road and lost contact with the rest of the division to his left. (How many times during the war does Cobb-Wofford Brigade drift to the right and lose contact with the rest of their division? Why?) At daylight on May 2, Wofford moved to his left and established contact with the line in that direction while staying to the right of the turnpike.

The Orange Plank Road and the Orange Turnpike leave Fredericksburg as a common road, split off from each other about a mile out beyond Salem Church with the Plank Road running south but parallel to the Turnpike, until they come back together at Chancellorsville. They then run together for about two miles, split again at the Wilderness Church and continue through the Wilderness toward Orange Court House.

May 2nd dawned with a heavy shelling from the Federals up the road. Wofford's men, including the Legion, advanced steadily all morning remaining to the right of the road and following to the right of the Turnpike after the split. I do not know the position of the Legion in this advance but usually they were either the left of the brigade or the next unit to the left.

"Fighting Joe" Hooker was already getting nervous. Things were not going exactly as he had planned and he realized he was hemmed in on three narrow roads leading through a thick "wilderness" where he could not maneuver and that he was being flanked by Wofford on his left. He therefore decided to withdraw back up the Plank Road to a position around Chancellorsville, which he had heavily fortified. His right however extended west for a long distance down the Turnpike further into the Wilderness. Hooker was depending on his cavalry to harass Lee's rear, forcing him to retreat toward Richmond. He was to be disappointed in this as his cavalry was totally ineffective and no match for Stuart's Southern horsemen and was of little help to him. He is credited for the saying, "Whoever saw a dead cavalryman?" He had expected little opposition on his advance from Chancellorsville up the roads toward Fredericksburg and when he did, and realized that he was facing the better part of Lee's army, he pulled back. Sedgwick with the VI Corps in Fredericksburg, also remained quiet allowing Lee to concentrate his forces against Hooker.

Lee followed the retiring Yankees to their new line around Chancellorsville and pushed it vigorously on all sides. He became convinced that his opponent had concentrated most of his troops in his front and that any attack on him by the much superior, in number, Union Army would result in serious losses and would probably result in a Yankee victory. He was determined to beat Hooker to the punch.

During the night of May 1, Lee and Jackson developed the daring plan of having "Stonewall" take his entire corps and, by a rapid march around to the left, strike the Federal's exposed right in the flank. This exposed flank had no natural fortifications and, we will later learn, was composed mainly of the Federal XI Corps which contained a large number of German soldiers who, when it came time to get down to the nitty gritty, were not too anxious to fight, but they were quick to flight. The Union Army contained a much higher

percentage of foreign born and foreign speaking troops than the Southern Army, about 18% vs 3%, or about six times percentage-wise and several times more than that number-wise.(8) The Rebel soldiers considered themselves much more American than their Yankee enemy.

The danger of this plan was in how to hold the Union Army in its present position at Chancellorsville while Jackson made his almost daylong march to the attack. "Stonewall" would take about 2/3 of the total army with him leaving Lee only about 16,000 men to hold Hooker in check. McLaws Division numbered about 8,345 men and averaged about 383 per regiment.(9) Lee felt confident that the greatly outnumbered divisions of McLaws and Anderson could do the job. They did it well!

On the morning of May 2, Jackson started his march by way of a back roads route which was supposed to keep him from being observed by the enemy; however, he was soon spotted by the Yankees who interpreted the movement as a retreat by the Southerners. His march would be of about 12 miles to the point where he was to make his surprise attack. The position was actually only about six miles from where he had left if going by the turnpike, well within hearing distance of Lee and the right wing. Fortunately for Lee and Jackson, the Union leaders took little heed to numerous reports that a large Southern Army was on the way toward their right flank.

McLaws and Anderson, and especially Wofford and his men did their part well keeping the enemy in their front busy and detracted from Jackson. At about 3:15 PM while Jackson was on the march, Wofford would make a vigorous attack on Hancock's line in his front and keep it up for about an hour. McLaws had ordered Wofford to threaten but "not to attack seriously" along with Jackson's attack on the left. McLaws said, "Wofford's men had their blood up however and had to be restrained. They withdrew in good spirits after driving the enemy from their entrenchments." About dark, Perry's troops, who had taken position off to Wofford's right, closed in to connect with him and give him some support.(10)

Around 6:00 PM, after the hard march, Jackson surprised the XI Corps which comprised the exposed right flank of the Federals along the Turnpike west of Chancellorsville in the Wilderness and caused a general stampede of frightened Yankees running and tearing through the bushes and woods with the Dutchmen leading the way back towards Chancellorsville and beyond to safety. They exclaimed, "Der wash too many mens for us. I ish going to mine company. Var ish de pontoons?"(11) It was a disgraceful flight and an embarrassment to the brave men of the Union Army especially to Hancock's, "Hancock the Superb", II Corps troops who were giving their best in front of Wofford and the Legion. Mjr. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock was one of the Union Army's most competent generals and his corps was composed of some of the nation's best fighting men. Wofford's Brigade and the boys from Bowdon would have other much too close encounters with this general's men at a little town in Pennsylvania later on in the summer and several times in next year's summer of '64 in Virginia.

Unfortunately nightfall came, putting a stop to the advance after a mile or more. The advancing battle line had become so disorganized due to the smoke, the woods and underbrush and darkness it was impossible to continue. While the gallant "Stonewall" was reconnoitering with his staff and other officers in front of his advanced lines, they were mistaken in the darkness and smoke from the battle for Yankee cavalry and were fired on by some of the North Carolina troops. He was seriously wounded in the right hand and left arm and fell from his horse. He was carried out and his left arm was amputated that night at a field hospital near the battlefield. Later he was transferred to the home of a doctor at Guinea Station, a safe distance from the battle. At first, it appeared that he would recover; however, pneumonia developed and he died on May 10. He was carried by rail in a special car to Richmond and then on to Lexington by canal boat where he is buried in the city cemetery not far from his beloved VMI.

On May 3, Lee instructed General Stuart, who now commanded Jackson's forces, to continue to push the enemy and he would do likewise on the right and thus reunite the two wings of his army. This was accomplished but with savage fighting and heavy losses for the entire day. McLaws' troops were heavily engaged all day and the Legion had another sad day with high losses in killed and wounded. In fact, Wofford and the Legion were back on the attack against Hancock's line before 7:00 AM.(12) See General

Lee's and General McLaws' reports at the end of this chapter for more details of exactly what Wofford's and the Legion's troops were doing at this time.

Late in the afternoon, a Rebel shell hit a porch column on which Hooker was leaning at the Chancellor house, knocking him down and disabling him for awhile and, some say, so demoralized him that he gave up all hopes for a victory.

Lee wanted to inflict a fatal blow on the Federals; however, his men were exhausted from two days of hard fighting and the enemy had by now withdrawn to a stronger position nearer the Rappahannock which had been even more strongly fortified. Also, about this time, it was learned that Early had been driven out of Fredericksburg and that Sedgwick was moving and threatening Lee's rear. Lee had to move fast! At about 12:30 PM he ordered McLaws, with the Legion, to move back down the Plank Road toward Fredericksburg where Rebel General Wilcox and his Alabamians were forming at Salem Church. Kershaw and Wofford's Brigades went in on Wilcox's right with Wofford to the right of Kershaw. The other brigades of McLaws extended Wilcox's line to the left. This entire line was entrenchments except in front of Wofford.(13)

It was only a short time after their arrival that Sedgwick's VI Corps made a furious attack on the Rebel line. Fighting was savage and it was imperative that the Southerners hold the Yankees back or else Lee would be squeezed tightly between the two Northern Armies. The line held after quite a scare. The most serious fighting was near the center of the line at Wilcox's position along the turnpike near the church and school; however, the Legion was engaged again with their old foe from Crampton's Gap, the VI Corps.

The next day General Lee himself arrived at Salem Church along with most of Anderson's Division and an attack was made by Wofford's and Kershaw's Brigades to push the enemy back and to make a junction with Early's troops who were coming up from Fredericksburg. At about 5:30 PM the attack began but because of the dense woods and underbrush Wofford did not push very far. It was planned to continue the next day. During the night of May 4-5, Sedgwick withdrew his army back across the river at Bank's Ford.

The Battle of Salem Church was a total Southern victory and now Lee would hurry most of his troops there back toward Chancellorsville to give "Fighting Joe" all of his attention. Wofford's men arrived back in the Chancellorsville line late in the afternoon in a terrible thunderstorm which lasted all night.

For a complete history of the Battle of Chancellorsville and Salem Church, read *The Battle of Chancellorsville* by Samuel P. Bates and John Bigelow, Jr.'s *The Campaign of Chancellorsville*.

Meanwhile, Hooker was safe in his fortifications and had completely lost all confidence stating, "My main responsibility is to protect Washington," (sound like McClellan?) and during the night under cover of the darkness and the storm, would withdraw his army back across the river ending The Battle of Chancellorsville.

This was considered a great victory for Lee's army but one they could ill afford. Their losses were approximately 12,800 while the Federal losses were about 17,000. Also gone was the leader of the Second Corps, the great "Stonewall" Jackson. These Southern losses could not be made up while the Yankees would draw on their unlimited resources of men and equipment and would soon be stronger than before.

With the loss of Jackson, Lee would have to reorganize his army and would do so by forming three corps out of the two. Longstreet would command the First Corps composed of McLaws', Hood's and Pickett's Divisions, while A. P. Hill and R. S. Ewell would command the other two. While these two generals were good subordinates, they were certainly no "Stonewall" and would prove so by failing General Lee on numerous occasions.

Another effect of these Southern victories at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville was that it gave hope that this was an invincible army which could defeat any Union Army brought against it. It was also perceived that this army could invade Pennsylvania and the North and be successful, probably winning the war.

At Chancellorsville-Salem Church, Wofford's Brigade reported losses of 74 killed, 479 wounded and nine missing. See General Lee's report, a portion of which is given later in this chapter, for losses in the various commands.

The Legion and Company B had suffered heavily again, reporting the highest losses in Longstreet's Corps which consisted of McLaws' and R. H. Anderson's Divisions. A few regiments in Jackson's command reported having more, but remember, the Legion was not of regimental size so the percentage of losses was as high or higher than any other.

At least 15 members of the Bowdon Volunteers, Company B, were killed or mortally wounded and a long list were seriously wounded. We found no mention of anyone's being captured. The killed or mortally wounded were: 2nd Lt.s Robert S. Fletcher and Frederick E. Ross, Privates Semour York Beck, R. C. Duke, J. G. Gabriel, Joshua M. McBurnett, John C. McDaniel, John N. Miles, John M. Morris, Thomas J. Morris, Joseph Pane, James M. Spruill, Henry J. Thomas and J. C. Upchurch. See Appendix B and G for a list of the losses in killed, wounded and captured. Company F also of Carroll County had at least five men killed or mortally wounded and many wounded seriously. Captain McDaniel's younger brother, nineteen-year-old John, was among those killed on May 3. What a terrible shock this must have been to the captain and what a sad thing to have to write to their mother and father back in Alabama with the bad news. A memorial marker to young John is in the family cemetery plot in Columbia Cemetery near Abbeville. Captain McDaniel himself was wounded severely in the hip.

This was another sad time back home in Bowdon. Just imagine so many families in a small town receiving news like this so close to that of the previous September after Crampton's Gap. We are talking about 30 or more families having a son, husband or brother killed. About 20 additional were captured and who knows how many were wounded.

Over 40% of the men who had marched away from the college in July, 1861 were dead from battle wounds or from disease. Another 20 or so of the Bowdon men were captured and in Yankee prison camps or in the process of being exchanged with their families back home probably not knowing if these men were alive or dead as they were reported to be missing in action. Others were wounded or sick with disease in Southern hospitals far from home.

Two other companies of Bowdon men were experiencing heavy casualties with reports of these losses coming home. Companies G, "The Boggess Avengers" and H, "The Wool Hat Boys" of the 41st Georgia experienced very heavy losses in killed and wounded including the life of the Legion's first captain, Charles McDaniel, at Perryville, Kentucky at near the same time as Crampton's Gap. Later, Companies B and C of the 56th Georgia would experience extremely heavy casualties in killed, wounded and especially captured at Champion Hill and Vicksburg, Mississippi. In no war in the history of this country have such losses been experienced. I doubt there was any town in the nation, both north or south, which suffered any more losses than that of the little village of Bowdon relative to its population. Bowdon was a very small town.

Among those killed at Chancellorsville was Private James M. Spruill, the brother of my wife's great grandfather, Zack, and the son of Gabriel Spruill of Bowdon. Gabriel would send five sons off to the war and only one would return. James of Company B, Cobb's Legion, and three of his brothers of Company C, 56th Georgia were killed or died from the results of harsh Yankee prison camps. Zack was captured at Champion Hill at the crossroads, got sick in prison, was exchanged and died shortly afterward in a Petersburg hospital and is buried in the Blandford Church Cemetery in an unmarked grave there.

Thank goodness the Legion would have no more days like those of Crampton's Gap and Chancellorsville. They would lose more men but nowhere nearly as many as in those two battles. Of course there were much fewer of them to be lost. For instance, Jim Mobley reported, "only 7 in company", after Chancellorsville.(14)

Among the wounded was the Legion's new colonel, Luther Glenn. He was shot through the left arm but returned to duty before the next campaign began; however, the wound would pain him for the rest of his life

and finally force his resignation from the Army of Northern Virginia. Glenn was a native of Washington County, raised in Henry and moved to Atlanta and was 45 years of age at this time. He had graduated from the University of Georgia and married the sister of Tom and Howell Cobb. Tom's wife called him "thrifless and intemperate" and Tom himself was critical of him but eventually called him "The best officer I have in the Legion."(15) He was the first captain of Company C, was promoted to major of the Legion on July 18, 1862 and to lieutenant colonel on September 15, 1862. He was forced to retire from active field duty in January, 1865 due to the effects of wounds and the rigors of war. He was appointed Commander of the Post of Atlanta serving there until the war ended when he surrendered the city to Col. B.B. Egleston of the 1st Ohio Cavalry. After the war he served two terms (1868-69) as mayor of Atlanta and also was a member of the Georgia Legislature. He died in June, 1886 and is buried in Oconee Hill Cemetery in Athens across the road from his brother-in-law, Howell.

General Lee's report, dated September 23, 1863, (condensed by author) states, "-----left Early's and Barksdale's Brigades in front of Fredericksburg. McLaws with his other brigades marched toward midnight on 30th (April). Next morning Jackson pushed an attack on the Plank Road with McLaws on the Turnpike. Enemy soon encountered on both roads with a strong attack on McLaws was repulsed----the enemy retired to within one mile of Chancellorsville where they assumed a position of great strength. That night decision made to turn enemy's right flank by Jackson with McLaws and Anderson remaining in front of enemy. Jackson successful----etc. As soon as sounds from Jackson were heard, the troops in front were ordered to press strongly on his left to prevent reinforcements going to his right.----- Morning of the 3rd for these troops to incline toward the left to connect with Jackson. McLaws was on the right of the Plank Road and made strong demonstration."(16)

He then tells of the action around Salem Church: "-----On May 3rd Wofford (and others) were sent back to about 5 miles of Fredericksburg to Salem Church where he took position on the right of Wilcox who was stalling the advance of Sedgwick. Enemy advanced in three strong lines. Enemy was repulsed with great slaughter. On the 4th pushed to join Early in Fredericksburg but Sedgwick made his escape across the river. On the 5th McLaws was ordered back to Chancellorsville and reached his destination during the afternoon in the midst of a violent thunderstorm which continued throughout the night----enemy took advantage of this and retreated across the river About 5,000 prisoners taken exclusive of their wounded who were left, 13 pieces of artillery, 19,500 stands of arms, 17 colors and large quantities of ammunition."(17)

He reports losses in Wofford's Brigade:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Total</u>
18th Ga	14	72	86
24th Ga.	14	73	87
16th Ga.	18	115	139
Cobb's	22	135	157
Phillip's	3	19	22
Staff	1	--	1
Total	72	414	486

As previously stated, Cobb's Legion had the highest number of casualties in Longstreet's Corps while a few regiments in Jackson's Corps had more. The Legion was composed of only seven companies while a regiment had ten companies. Again these figures do not reflect the true number as in the Legion, Company B and Company F, also of Carroll County and with 5 reported killed, alone had maybe 20 killed or mortally wounded. The other five companies surely had more than two men killed to equal the reported total.

McLaws' report states (condensed), "May 1. At 12:30 put on the march up the Plank Road. By 6 AM on 2nd were in rifle pits on Smith Hill----At 11 AM Jackson ordered McLaws to attack up the Plank Road. After a short distance enemy was met and line of battle formed across the road. Enemy attacked on left [Wofford was on the right], was repulsed and about 4 PM we advanced, halted at dark & bivouacked along the heights just beyond where Mine Run crosses the Turnpike. On the 2nd, battle line formed in the same order. Ordered to press to the left, keeping the right [Wofford] on the Turnpike, to connect with Jackson."

About dark, McLaws ordered an advance along the whole line but to not attack seriously. "General Wofford, [with the Legion], became engaged so seriously that I ordered him to withdraw, which was done in good order, his men in good spirits, after driving the enemy to their entrenchments. [This is probably the time when the Legion had its greatest number of casualties?]. On the night of the third nothing much happened. The next morning, General Wofford threw a portion of his command across a valley between him and the Chancellorsville heights and thus prevented the escape of a considerable body of the enemy which had been opposed to his command---I directed a flag of truce to be sent them [the enemy] and they surrendered. I think Gen. Wofford is entitled to most credit for their capture [The Legion was involved in this]. Learned that heights of Fredericksburg had been taken & ordered troops back to Salem Church----- enemy attacked before command was well up---enemy repulsed---About 300-400 prisoners taken and about same number buried. The next morning Wofford and Kershaw ordered to advance but withdrew in the evening to previous position. The following morning Wofford [with the Legion] advanced as far as the River Road engaging the enemy as he went and driving them before him. He halted for the night beyond the River Road extending his pickets. By the next morning enemy [Sedgwick] was across the river and my command was employed in burying the dead and attending to the wounded."(18)

After Hooker gave up the fight and recrossed the river, McLaws was ordered to his former position in front of Fredericksburg leaving Wofford, with the Legion, at Bank's Ford. He reports casualties in Wofford's Brigade as 562 killed, wounded and missing with nine men missing. Reports taking over 1,200 prisoners.

After Chancellorsville, the Legion's organization was as follows:

- Army of Northern Virginia, General Robert E. Lee
- First Corps, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet (not present at Chancellorsville)
- 1st Division, Maj. Gen. Lafayette McLaws
- 1st Brigade, Brig. Gen. W. T. Wofford (Wofford's Brig.)
- Cobb's Georgia Legion, Col. Luther Glenn
 - Major, Carmack
 - Company B, Captain William McDaniel
 - Company F, Captain George W. Moore

After the battle, the Legion would eventually return, after duty at Bank's Ford, to its Camp Cobb's Legion on Howison Hill as Fredericksburg was again fortified due to Hooker's Army taking up their former position on the heights across the river. The Southern forces were put to work cleaning up the battlefield, collecting arms and other supplies left behind by "Fighting Joe's" men. The Rebel Army was well supplied with guns, tents, oil cloths, blankets etc., furnished with the compliments of the Yankee Quartermaster.

The legionnaires would draw their share of picket duty and on May 16, Benji Mobley, who was now back with the Legion from his vacation in the Yankee prisons, would write his mother, Elizabeth Barrow Mobley, "I am still in the land of the living, have read many a Yankee letter --." He said that he would send her one but none were "fit". On Sunday, he saw one man with his gun on a Yankee when a wild turkey flew up "he put his gun on the turkey and killed it."(19).

Lee began putting his army in good order. All leaves were cancelled and six drills per week were required and new recruits were brought in, including even a few for Company B. Also exchanged prisoners from the Maryland Campaign, some of Company B, were returning. President Davis and General Lee reviewed the whole of Longstreet's Corps. The army was never before or afterward under better discipline nor in better fighting trim.(20) It was again up to around 68,000 man strength.

It was time to live off the Yankees and on June 3, 1863, McLaws' Division, with Wofford's Brigade and Cobb's Legion and Company B, led off toward Pennsylvania with Hood following on the 4th. Hood was followed by Pickett with Longstreet again being present with his First Corps.